

### **Amendments to the Claims:**

*This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:*

1. (currently amended) A method for managing information and rendering discounts in a billing system, the method comprising:

receiving a customer record including data;

establishing a rule-based accumulation engine including a non-application specific, configurable, system that processes input data to produce output data where the processing is dictated by a set of configurable rules;

processing the record with the accumulation engine to accumulate the data in a plurality of predetermined target accumulators;

establishing a rule-based discount engine including a non-application specific, configurable, system that processes input data to produce output data where the processing is dictated by a set of configurable rules; and

processing the plurality of target accumulators with the discount engine to render discounts applicable to the customer.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the record has a record type and wherein establishing the accumulation engine further comprises:

establishing a rules table that directs the accumulation engine based on the record type.

3. (original) The method of claim 2 wherein establishing the accumulation engine further comprises:

establishing at least one rule for processing a record by performing a sequence of operations to the data, wherein the rules table directs the accumulation engine to apply the at least one rule when dictated by the record type.

4. (original) The method of claim 3 wherein establishing the accumulation engine further comprises:

establishing at least one function for processing a record, wherein the rules table directs the accumulation engine to apply the at least one function when dictated by the record type.

5. (original) The method of claim 3 wherein the rules table directs the accumulation engine to pass the data directly to a target accumulator when dictated by the record type.

6. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the record includes at least one source field, and wherein receiving the record further comprises:

assigning a logical name to a source field, wherein the accumulation engine processes the record using the logical name.

7. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein establishing the discount engine further comprises:

establishing at least one rule for processing the record to evaluate discount qualification; and

establishing at least one rule for processing the record to evaluate discount application.

8. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein establishing the discount engine further comprises:

establishing at least one simple rule for processing the record.

9. (original) The method of claim 8 wherein establishing the discount engine further comprises:

establishing at least one compound rule for processing the record, the at least one compound rule being composed of a plurality of simple rules, wherein the discount engine applies a compound rule by recursively applying simple rules.

10. (currently amended) A discount system for managing information and rendering discounts in a billing system, the discount system comprising:

a rule-based engine including a non-application specific, configurable, system that processes input data to produce output data where the processing is dictated by a set of configurable rules configured to receive a customer record including data, process the record to accumulate the data in a plurality of predetermined target accumulators, process the plurality of target accumulators to render discounts applicable to the customer.

11. (currently amended) A computer readable storage medium having information stored thereon representing instructions executable by a computer to manage information and render discounts in a billing system, the computer readable storage medium further comprising:

instructions for receiving a customer record including data;

instructions for establishing a rule-based accumulation engine including a non-application specific, configurable, system that processes input data to produce output data where the processing is dictated by a set of configurable rules;

instructions for processing the record with the accumulation engine to accumulate the data in a plurality of predetermined target accumulators;

instructions for establishing a rule-based discount engine including a non-application specific, configurable, system that processes input data to produce output data where the processing is dictated by a set of configurable rules; and

instructions for processing the plurality of target accumulators with the discount engine to render discounts applicable to the customer.

12. (original) The medium of claim 11 wherein the record has a record type and wherein the medium further comprises:

instructions for establishing a rules table that directs the accumulation engine based on the record type.

13. (original) The medium of claim 12 further comprising:

instructions for establishing at least one rule for processing a record by performing a sequence of operations to the data, wherein the rules table directs the accumulation engine to apply the at least one rule when dictated by the record type.

14. (original) The medium of claim 13 further comprising:

instructions for establishing at least one function for processing a record, wherein the rules table directs the accumulation engine to apply the at least one function when dictated by the record type.

15. (original) The medium of claim 13 wherein the rules table directs the accumulation engine to pass the data directly to a target accumulator when dictated by the record type.

16. (original) The medium of claim 11 wherein the record includes at least one source field, and wherein the medium further comprises:

instructions for assigning a logical name to a source field, wherein the accumulation engine processes the record using the logical name.

17. (original) The medium of claim 11 further comprising:

instructions for establishing at least one rule for processing the record to evaluate discount qualification; and

instructions for establishing at least one rule for processing the record to evaluate discount application.

18. (original) The medium of claim 11 further comprising:

instructions for establishing at least one simple rule for processing the record.

19. (original) The medium of claim 18 further comprising:

instructions for establishing at least one compound rule for processing the record, the at least one compound rule being composed of a plurality of simple rules, wherein the discount engine applies a compound rule by recursively applying simple rules.